

THE GUILD OF ST. BARNABAS

IN CHARGE OF

S. M. DURAND

Public Library, Boston



MOST sanitariums are far from being the most cheerful places for a well person to live in, however great the benefit they may afford the sick, and the establishments at hot springs which are to be found all through Western Europe are no exception to this rule. At the well-known Baths of Louèche, in Switzerland, where most of the patients spend the day in a hot bath playing checkers and other games on small floating tables, one may see countless pathetic cases of physical and mental helplessness. During the evening table d'hôte dinner, which prevails here, as everywhere else in Swiss hotels, one will probably find that the neighbor at his right must have his food cut up for him, while a still more helpless man on the left cannot even convey the food to his mouth.

The bib, usually associated with early childhood, is a necessary adjunct here for very many of the guests. Then, too, there is a constant accompaniment of almost inarticulate talk, which is rendered the more difficult to understand by reason of the variety of languages spoken by the invalids.

Louèche-les-Bains, or Leukerbad (for it is known by both names), is a tiny village consisting of three hotels, the baths, and a few villagers. All sorts of invalids go there, including many paralytics. It is enclosed in a valley situated at the foot of the Gemmi Pass. A winding foot-path leads up the face of the cliff to the top of the Pass. The scenery is of the grandest description, and many walks and excursions may vary the monotony of existence here, and those in love with mountain climbing may satisfy that longing in several directions. Passing through fresh groves and admiring the Alpine flowers, one ascends above these spots and obtains a view which more than repays him for his exertions.

In winter everything is covered with snow, and the numerous cascades form great masses of ice suspended from the rocks like stalactites. In spring the thaw comes, and the avalanches descend into the valley with a noise like thunder. Severe storms are frequent here, and the dense, dark clouds, from which issue flashes of lightning, make a solemn and striking effect on the mind of the beholder.

Let us hope these beauties of nature are some comfort to those taking the baths.

WE print an extract from Dr. Ingalls's paper, and hope to continue our quotation next month. This paper was read at the late council in Hartford, and being the fruit of much experience must have been full of interest for those who heard it.—ED.

It was my fortunate privilege to enter the profession of medicine in the days when training-schools were in their infancy, and only a few of the larger hospitals in this country had taken them up. I think that perhaps very few of you

here know how institution work was done at that time, but it has left a very vivid impression on my mind. The modern hospitals, with their well-equipped facilities for receiving the better class of patients in their private rooms, were just beginning to be built in the larger cities. The operations were then operations of necessity, and many cases which now are subjected to surgical interference were not thought proper to be received for operation, and the results of work performed were far below those obtained to-day.

Again, it was not the custom for so many *medical* cases to be sent to hospitals for treatment. Sick people were treated in their own homes, and the hospitals were only in the main occupied by the poor and friendless, and the necessity for skilled nursing was not recognized. The sick at home were nursed by friends and relatives, the professional nurse was a rarity, and the trained nurse for private work an undiscovered article.

My first hospital appointment was in a small hospital of forty beds, with the medical and surgical service equally divided, the preponderance, if any, being in favor of surgical patients. A very good woman who had had some experience in taking care of the sick was in charge. She was not head nurse or superintendent, but was called matron, and had a general oversight of everything. We had a male nurse in the male ward and a so-called nurse in the female ward, and, seeing how we carry on our institution work to-day, I can but wonder at the way we got along then. These people had received absolutely no instruction in the theory or art of caring for the sick, and as for rendering modern surgical assistance, they were in no way educated for the position. They were simply good, faithful people, endowed with good common-sense, loyal to the medical officers, punctilious in carrying out orders, and gave their patients the best service permitted by their limited knowledge. How did we get along? for get along we certainly did, and our results were very satisfactory. Of course, the medical attendants at the hospital had to have a larger personal contact with the patients, and attended to a much greater share of the detail work than is done now; but these people learned to take care of their patients, their good common-sense taught them to watch for symptoms, and not having the medical and surgical responsibility placed upon them, they were not confounded by too much theoretical knowledge; their tact stood them well in hand, and holding the same position year in and year out, they became beautifully adapted machines, and the work went on with a degree of smoothness and success which is hard to realize, and perhaps would be impossible to-day.

Finishing a term in this smaller institution, I was a successful competitor for a position in one of the large New York hospitals, whose work was altogether surgical and whose list of visiting surgeons carried the names of the most prominent men of this country in their chosen specialty. Here was a different proposition. Bellevue, Charity, and New York Hospitals had started their training-schools for nurses, and our hospital was still sailing on under the old-fashioned methods of the previous decade. On the one hand, the young, intelligent, well-educated, neatly uniformed pupil of the training-school, with her bright, cheering smile, her deft hands, and her theory well mastered, administering the drugs whose use she had studied and understood, making the surgical dressings after the most approved methods taught her by her instructor in surgery, keeping her charts and clinical histories in an intelligent and professional manner, certainly gave an air of thoroughness and exactness to the care of hospital cases which lessened the hard work of the medical men and had a great deal to do with the improved statistics of hospital results. On the other hand, the good old nurses,

limited in education, to be sure, but tried and found trusty by their long years of service, not looking forward to the end of their two years of pupilage for personal independence, satisfied to stay in the same ward year in and year out, the personal experience of hundreds and hundreds of cases to give them their confidence, and each year adding to their good record of faithful and devoted service, were most valuable aids and gave the men in charge of the work a feeling of the greatest confidence that their work would be looked after and cared for with a painstaking, unselfish devotion which would bring good results.

I was fortunate in entering on my work in the old days under the old methods. It was an education.

To-day we have in every city of consequence one or more schools, and the profession of nursing has become one of the well-recognized, noble, and dignified professions, and offers to the young woman of to-day advantages and opportunities of taking up a life work full of responsibility and requires on the part of those entering as much, if not more, stability of character and purpose as any field of labor which could be selected.

A young woman of good education, of good bringing up, with some good, practical ideas of her own, and a feeling that she desires not only to be independent from a financial standpoint, but that she wishes to accomplish some definite aim in life, and is willing to work for such an end, can find a magnificent opportunity and can enter upon a field of usefulness in the ranks of a profession which is second to none, and in which there is as much to bring satisfaction for work accomplished as any profession open to the women of our day.

(To be continued.)

ORANGE, N. J.—On account of Thanksgiving Day falling on our usual date, our meeting was advanced a week and held on November 16 at Christ Church, East Orange. The address was made by the rector of the parish, the Rev. W. W. Davies. Four active and two associate members were admitted. The business meeting was held in the parish-room adjoining the church. The report of the council meeting in Hartford was given by the active delegate, Miss C. Benz, and, while we shall all in due time receive a full account in detail of all that was said and done there, a word of thanks and appreciation cannot be left unsaid by those who were so fortunate as to be the recipients of the cordial and profuse hospitality extended to all comers by the Hartford Branch. Every minute of the time had been provided for, and there were details of nurses to see to every one's wants. Our own calendar is now in circulation, and forms a reminder for all future meetings, while it also reveals several pleasant social events for the coming year. The sewing meetings commence December 10 and will be held monthly at various appointed houses, the objects being for the fresh air and settlement work. As is already known, the scheme which had engaged the earnest attention of the Orange Branch, to make some provision for the nurse when incapacitated from supporting herself, has been laid in the hands of a committee of five, who, it is hoped, will be able to frame such a project as will commend itself to every nurse now in active service, looking to the future of possible breakdowns and ill-health, and receive the hearty support of all in the guild, not so much that we look for misfortune ourselves, but that we shall be in the position of helping less fortunate sisters who might otherwise have to depend on the charity of others.

BROOKLYN.—The most interesting item concerning the Brooklyn Branch of the Guild of St. Barnabas centres in the council held in Hartford in November. The chaplain, secretary, and one delegate were present, being a full representation of the branch. The unanimous opinion of those present was expressed that the council exceeded all other councils in interest, and as year by year the same assertion is made, the increasing interest in the guild, both within and without its bounds, is shown. The hospitality extended by the Hartford Branch was duly appreciated by all branches. The Brooklyn Branch was most favorably impressed with the evident desire on the part of our entertainers to cause us to carry away the permanent assurance of the good will of the city of Hartford. The guild meetings are regularly held, with attendance as good as can be expected where the nurses are kept so busy, making it almost impossible to arrange for any special event; consequently, after the service, the social half-hour, which is held in the Parish-House, is always enjoyed by those who are able to remain for a cup of tea and light refreshment. This keeps the nurses in touch with each other and in the interest of the guild.

BOSTON.—The regular November meeting of the Boston Branch of the Guild of St. Barnabas, having been postponed, was finally held on December 1, 1903, at eight o'clock at St. Stephen's Parish-House. It was a long and most interesting meeting, as Mr. Bishop, the chaplain of this branch, gave a graphic account of the proceedings of the General Council, which met at Hartford. Various plans were discussed by the chaplains as to how best to benefit the nurses and carry on the work of the guild. It was apparently decided that the guild support a missionary nurse, and there is also a suggestion of an insurance organization which shall help the sick or incapacitated nurses. The account of the hospitality extended to the guild was received with much interest by the meeting, which was, by the way, very large. Plans were also set on foot for the Christmas party, and the same committee which greatly distinguished itself last year was reappointed. After the business meeting a service was held in the church, at which Mr. Bishop officiated. The text for the sermon was "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," and we were urged to cultivate peace as our Advent discipline. After the service the usual social gathering was held in the guild-room of the Parish-House. The attendance was unusually large, and among the other things discussed at the business meeting were the matter of calling in new members, which the committee already appointed were to take up; also the amount we should pledge for a mission nurse. St. Barnabas's Bee has already had one meeting at St. Anna's House, and it is to be held regularly, as heretofore. One of the associates kindly invited us to use her rooms at the Brunswick for our next bee. The members of the guild are not able to attend the bee with much regularity, but we all like to come when we can.



A FRIEND tells the following truthful tale about a parrot which had been taught to say "Quack, quack," when questioned about geese. The parrot spent the summer in a doctor's family, where the wife tried to teach it to say "doctor," but invariably the bird answered, "Quack, quack."